

REMARKS

Claims 1-26 are pending.

Applicant confirms the election of Group II, claims 17-26, with traverse, made by Attorney Timothy A. French during a telephone conference held on January 28, 2005.

Claims 17 and 24 are independent.

Applicant amended claims 20, 25 and 26 to provide proper antecedent basis for all terms used. No new matter was added.

The examiner uses Waller to reject claims 17-19 and 24-26 as having been anticipated.

Claims 17 and 24 recite "a housing defining an elongated conduit having a tapering conical wall defining a first screw thread and a water-channel thread extending therealong including generally between a first opening into a distal region of the conduit for receiving a flow of liquid and a second opening into a proximal region of the conduit," or similar language. At least this claim feature is neither disclosed or suggested in Waller.

On the contrary, Waller discloses:

The valve body 12 is formed with a generally frustoconical wall section between the inlet flange and the outlet and has a continuous helical land 28 and groove 30 formed on the inside surface of the tubular wall between the inlet and outlet. A valve member 12 of a similar, generally frustoconical shape is mounted in the tubular housing and is supported on the end of a spindle or shaft 34 which projects downwardly through an opening in the lower housing wall and is sealed by a pair of "O" rings 36. The valve member is formed with a generally conically shaped pointed upper end portion 38 and a cylindrical side wall surface 40 extends downwardly thereof having a diameter slightly less than the internal diameter of the inlet passage 14 of the tubular housing. Below the cylindrical surface 40, the valve member is provided with a frustoconical seating surface 42 adapted to seal against a matching annular frustoconical seating surface 44 formed on the inside wall surface of the valve body below the inlet passage 14. The seating surfaces could also be spherical in shape or flat. (Col. 4, lines 3-23)

Accordingly, claims 17 and 24 are not anticipated by Waller.

The examiner uses Smith to reject claims 17-19 and 24-26 as having been anticipated.

As described above, claims 17 and 24 recite "a housing defining an elongated conduit having a tapering conical wall defining a first screw thread and a water-channel thread extending therealong including generally between a first opening into a distal region of the conduit for

receiving a flow of liquid and a second opening into a proximal region of the conduit," or similar language. At least this claim feature is neither disclosed or suggested in Smih.

On the contrary, Smith discloses:

The generally cylindrical body 10 includes a central cylinder 12 having end flanges 14 and 16. One end of the body 10 may be closed by a cap 18 having a flange 20 which is secured to the flange 16 by suitable threaded bolts or the like 22. The other end of the body may have a cover 24 having an annular flange 26 which is secured to the flange 14 by suitable threaded bolts or the like 28. A O-ring 30 may seal the flanges 26 and 14 and an O-ring 32 may seal the flanges 16 and 20. (Col. 1, lines 30-38)

Accordingly, claims 17 and 24 are not anticipated by Smith.

The examiner uses Waller and Bryant to reject claims 21 and 22 as having been obvious.

Claim 17 is not obvious in view of Waller and Bryant. Waller was discussed above.

Bryant teaches a housing having chambers. (Col.3, line 13-14) Bryant fails to teach or suggest "a housing defining an elongated conduit having a tapering conical wall defining a first screw thread and a water-channel thread extending therealong including generally between a first opening into a distal region of the conduit for receiving a flow of liquid and a second opening into a proximal region of the conduit."

Claims 21 and 22 depend upon, and add further limitations to, claim 17. Accordingly, claims 21 and 22 are not obvious in light of Waller and Bryant.

The examiner uses Waller, Smith and Pett to reject claim 23 as having been obvious.

Claim 17 is not obvious in view of Waller, Smith and Pett. Waller and Smith were discussed above. Pett teaches:

The valve construction 10 includes a body portion 12 that defines the main valve unit and has an inlet port (not shown) and an outlet port 14, both ports being internally threaded for receiving an inlet pipe (not shown) and an outlet pipe 16, respectively, therein. Formed in the body portion 12 and communicating with the inlet port is an inlet chamber (not shown), while an outlet chamber 18 is formed in the opposite portion of body portion 12 and communicates with the outlet port 16. Not illustrated completely in the present invention, but disclosed in more detail in U.S. Pat. No. 3,791,619, is a diaphragm assembly that includes a seat portion 20 that is engageable with a seat 22 for sealing an opening 24 through which fluid passes from the inlet chamber to the outlet chamber 18. Integrally joined to the seat portion 20 of the diaphragm valve assembly is a flexible membrane 26 that is secured between a flange 28 joined to the body portion 12 and a flange formed on a cap portion (not shown) that is mounted on the body portion 12 in fixed relation by cap screws, as illustrated in U.S. Pat. No. 3,791,619. The cap portion has a

crown configuration that defines an interior chamber 30 that is formed between the upper portion of the diaphragm and the underside of the cap portion. As further illustrated and described in U.S. Pat. No. 3,791,619, a pilot valve is provided for remotely controlling the operation of the valve construction and includes a solenoid valve of conventional design and operation. (Col. 2, line 49 to col. 3, line 14)

Claim 23 depends upon, and adds further limitations to, claim 17. Accordingly, claim 23 is not obvious in view of Waller, Smith and Pett.

It is believed that all of the pending claims have been addressed. However, the absence of a reply to a specific rejection, issue or comment does not signify agreement with or concession of that rejection, issue or comment. In addition, because the arguments made above may not be exhaustive, there may be reasons for patentability of any or all pending claims (or other claims) that have not been expressed. Finally, nothing in this paper should be construed as an intent to concede any issue with regard to any claim, except as specifically stated in this paper, and the amendment of any claim does not necessarily signify concession of unpatentability of the claim prior to its amendment.

Please apply any charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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Fish & Richardson P.C.
225 Franklin Street
Boston, MA 02110
Telephone: (617) 542-5070
Facsimile: (617) 542-8906


Kenneth F. Kozik
Reg. No. 36,572